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COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Action Against Molotov's Supporters

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. On 1 Mar 54 a reshuffle of the Party apparatus and the various offices established under Stalin was begun. The impulse for this came from N. S. Khrushchev; the orders from the Presidium of the Central Committee.
2. The purge is in the hands of S.D. Ignatiev, formerly Minister of State Security, recently appointed to the Secretariat of the Party, a member of the Malenkov group, who seems destined for further promotion. It is directed primarily against Molotov's supporters, and several of his followers in minor positions have already been dismissed. A. P. Tretiakov, Minister of Health, who was removed on 3 Mar 54, was considerably more than a minor figure, and was one of Molotov's strongest supporters.
3. The drive against Molotov, planned for some time, has been intensified by Chinese and German criticism of the way Berlin Conference issues were handled. On the other hand Molotov is strongly backed by the army, and it is unlikely that action against him can be carried very far unless some downright failure in foreign policy develops. Nevertheless, he is gradually being deprived of support within the Kremlin. A. N. Kosygin, the most efficient young leader of the Molotov group, was replaced in his post as Minister of Consumer Goods by N. K. Ryzhov, a protégé of Khrushchev, on 7 Mar 54.

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